

From Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER OF NEW ZEALAND to Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER OF COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA. 23rd August, 1916.

New Zealand Shipping Company inform me they have chartered steamers "Copenhagen," "Gogovale," "Southwaite," and "St. Andrews" to load wool in Dominion during coming season, and that they will probably come via Australia. I would ask that no action be taken by your Government which will prevent these vessels' services being made available for New Zealand.

From Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER OF COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA to Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER OF NEW ZEALAND. 2nd September, 1916.

With reference to your telegram of 24th August: Regret unable to comply with your request with regard to four vessels mentioned, as Australian demand for tonnage is urgent and imperative. Necessary to use our inward steamers for our own back loading. Already we have to pay many steamers coming in ballast. Most anxious to help you at any time, and for this reason granted immunity "Willaston," but we must give due consideration to producers in Commonwealth.—HUGHES.

From HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND to Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER. 13th September, 1916.

With reference to my telegram of 18th August: Secretary of State for Colonies received reply that Commonwealth has no intention of requisitioning steamer "Willaston." I have now asked Colonial Office to telegraph for similar undertaking for six New Zealand wool steamers being chartered by New Zealand Shipping Company and discharging outward cargo in Australia. Names of vessels, "Copenhagen," "Southwaite," "Gogovale," "Saint Andrew"; remaining two not yet known.

From HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND to Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER. 29th September, 1916.

Six wool steamers: With reference to my telegram of 13th September, Colonial Office has received reply that Commonwealth had informed you on 2nd September that they were unable grant your request for undertaking not to requisition four of the steamers named. I was of course unaware you had already approached Commonwealth. New Zealand Shipping Company contemplate cancelling some vessels unless undertaking given. Please telegraph whether you can do anything further with Commonwealth.

From Hon. the ACTING PRIME MINISTER, Wellington, to Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER, London. 20th October, 1916.

From information available it seems likely that five steamers chartered by the New Zealand Shipping Company which are to discharge in Australia may be commandeered by the Commonwealth Government. In August last the Commonwealth Government were communicated with requesting that nothing should be done which would prevent these vessels being made available for New Zealand homeward loading. Later information available from Australia is still unsatisfactory. You will understand that it will be most disastrous to New Zealand if any action is taken by the Commonwealth Government which will prevent these vessels being available for wool and general cargo from New Zealand this season. I am advised that no other steamers are procurable, and if those which have been secured are diverted the wool and other cargo which these vessels could lift will be forced to remain in the Dominion for some considerable time.

1917.

COPIES OF TELEGRAMS BETWEEN THE RIGHT HON. THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE HON. THE ACTING PRIME MINISTER, ETC.

From Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER, London, to Hon. the ACTING PRIME MINISTER, Wellington. 30th October, 1916.

With reference to your telegram of 20th October: Have telegraphed to Prime Minister Commonwealth with regard to commandeering New Zealand ships. No reply received yet.

From Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER, London, to Hon. the ACTING PRIME MINISTER, Wellington. 11th January, 1917.

Controller Shipping informs me that refrigerated space placed at disposal of New Zealand, period February-May last year, amounted to over 8,000,000 cubic feet. In corresponding period this year there will be over 9,000,000; increase, 950,000. Secondly, there will be difficulty with regard to shipment of fruit. Suggest(s) that fruit should be forwarded if possible by transports; otherwise great hardship fruitgrowers.

From Hon. the ACTING PRIME MINISTER, Wellington, to Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER, London. 28th April, 1917.

From information received by Government from the shipping companies it appears that British Minister for Shipping, acting through Owners' Committee, London, has instructed that